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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECRET

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COUNTRY East Germany

REPORT NO.

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SUBJECT Status of the Critical Power Shortage

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REFERENCES

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1. At the beginning of June 1953, both the State Secretariat for Power and the State Planning Commission had drawn up proposals for the stopping of power cuts within East Germany. A commission, which was formed on 9 June, investigated the situation and found that in spite of: the limitation of power supplies to the large consumers, including SAG plants, during peak periods; the examination of damaged machinery for the purpose of returning to use; and the examination of machinery under repair, power cuts could not be avoided in the third and fourth quarters of 1953. In addition, the commission estimated that in the third quarter of 1953 there would be an average deficit of 60 mw, and in the fourth quarter, 190 mw. These deficiencies could only be made up by importing electric power or by making additional cuts in large consumers' supplies, including those of SAGs, of power on 19 June 1953. A power cut of 150 mw to SAG consumers was requested by Bruno Leuschner of the State Planning Commission, but this was not, however, approved by Trofimovl of the USIG, who agreed only to a maximum cut of 100 mw.
2. The State Secretariat for Chemistry was instructed to cut its requirements by 60 mw. The Secretariat stated that this figure was unacceptable, and a reduction of only 19 mw would be possible. As a result of this, the State Secretariat for Power had an operational reserve of only 180 mw, instead of the 230 mw which had been originally planned.
3. The control and distribution of electric power as introduced on 24 April had not been adhered to by all civil and industrial consumers throughout East Germany. The switch from night to day shifts in heavy industry effected a saving of 80 mw nightly, although it also resulted in a 25 percent increase in daily consumption. This meant in effect that within a short time a complete breakdown would be caused in the East German network. Therefore, it was necessary to introduce cuts without any warning beginning 6 July in order to preserve the power network.

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4. Proposals for insuring the supply of electric power:

- a. Because the Central Committee of the SED had taken the initiative in stopping power cuts, it now had to explain the crisis in the electricity supply system during June. SED functionaries in industry were called upon to observe any misuse or wastage of power. The SED Central Committee issued instructions that, in order to insure a constant supply of electricity, more disciplined and rational use must be made of it. Industries which had altered their shifts should return to their former schedules. The FDGB must be kept informed of the situation by the SED Central Committee in order to take the necessary action.
- b. The permission of the Soviet High Commission must be obtained to import electric power [REDACTED]. The necessary measures for such importation already had been discussed by the State Secretariat for Power and the DIA, and referred to the DIA Minister² for action. The hope was expressed during these discussions that between 80 and 100 mw would be imported [REDACTED].
- c. Negotiations with the USIG should be opened to effect a cut of 150 mw during the recognized peak periods.
- d. The State Secretariat for Power should ascertain from the Ministries of Heavy and General Machine Construction what damaged machinery could be repaired in time for use during the third and fourth quarters of 1953.
- e. The State Secretariat for Chemistry is to show how, with the hitherto agreed reduction of 19 mw, unrestricted current is to be provided for the needs of the population. In case of necessity, the 5 kv-aluminum plant at Bitterfeld should stop production, as in this way a smaller loss of manufactured goods would follow than through a further reduction in carbide.
- f. The threshing period should be extended until December 1953, so that the consumption of electricity could be cut by 30 to 50 mw. The Ministry of Agriculture should determine if the extension of the threshing period (after harvesting) would have any detrimental effects.
- g. Proposals for the distribution and control of electric power should be submitted to the Ministerrat by the State Secretariat for Power.
- h. An explanation to the public of the fuel situation for the coming winter should be made in order to obtain fullest support for the power consumption policy of the SED Central Committee.
- i. The State Secretariat for Power should start a publicity drive for the disciplined use of electric power through the press and radio.

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1. [REDACTED] Comment. Probably Sergei Petrovich Trofimov.
2. [REDACTED] Comment. Probably the Minister of Foreign and Domestic Trade (MIA Minister) is meant.

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